

Daniel The man of God



Daniel and his three friends lived in Israel. One day a great king came to their homeland and took all the smart young men away to his country. The king had a huge long name - Nebuchadnezzar - and he lived in a faraway country called Babylon.



The young men were treated very well in Babylon. The king had chosen the brightest and best young men from every country in the world. He planned to train them in the language of Babylon so they could become his servants and help him run the kingdom.



The food was good, too. The young men ate what the king ate. But Daniel and his friends did not want to eat the food because it had been devoted to false gods. Daniel had promised he would never do anything against his God. The God of Israel had commanded His people to have nothing to do with idols or false gods.



Daniel asked the person in charge of his training for permission not to eat the king's food. If the king found out, he would be very angry. But God had made Daniel a favorite with this man.



He agreed to give Daniel and his friends a test. For ten days they would eat only vegetables and drink only water. At the end of ten days Daniel and his friends looked much healthier than all the other young men who ate the king's food. So they were allowed to continue with vegetables and water.



These young men honored God. And God honored them. God gave them knowledge and skill in the things they learned, and Daniel had wisdom to understand all visions and dreams.





After three years of school in Babylon, all the young men were presented to King Nebuchadnezzar. He picked Daniel and his three friends as the best of them all. In fact, the King discovered that Daniel had more wisdom than all the wise men in his kingdom.

One night, the king had a bad dream. He called for his magicians, astrologers and sorcerers to come and stand before him. The king said, "I have dreamed a dream, and my spirit is anxious to understand the dream."

The wise men answered, "O king, live for ever! Tell your servants the dream, and we will tell you what it means."



The king responded, "No! You must tell me what I dreamed and what it means. If you don't, you will be cut in pieces and your houses burned!

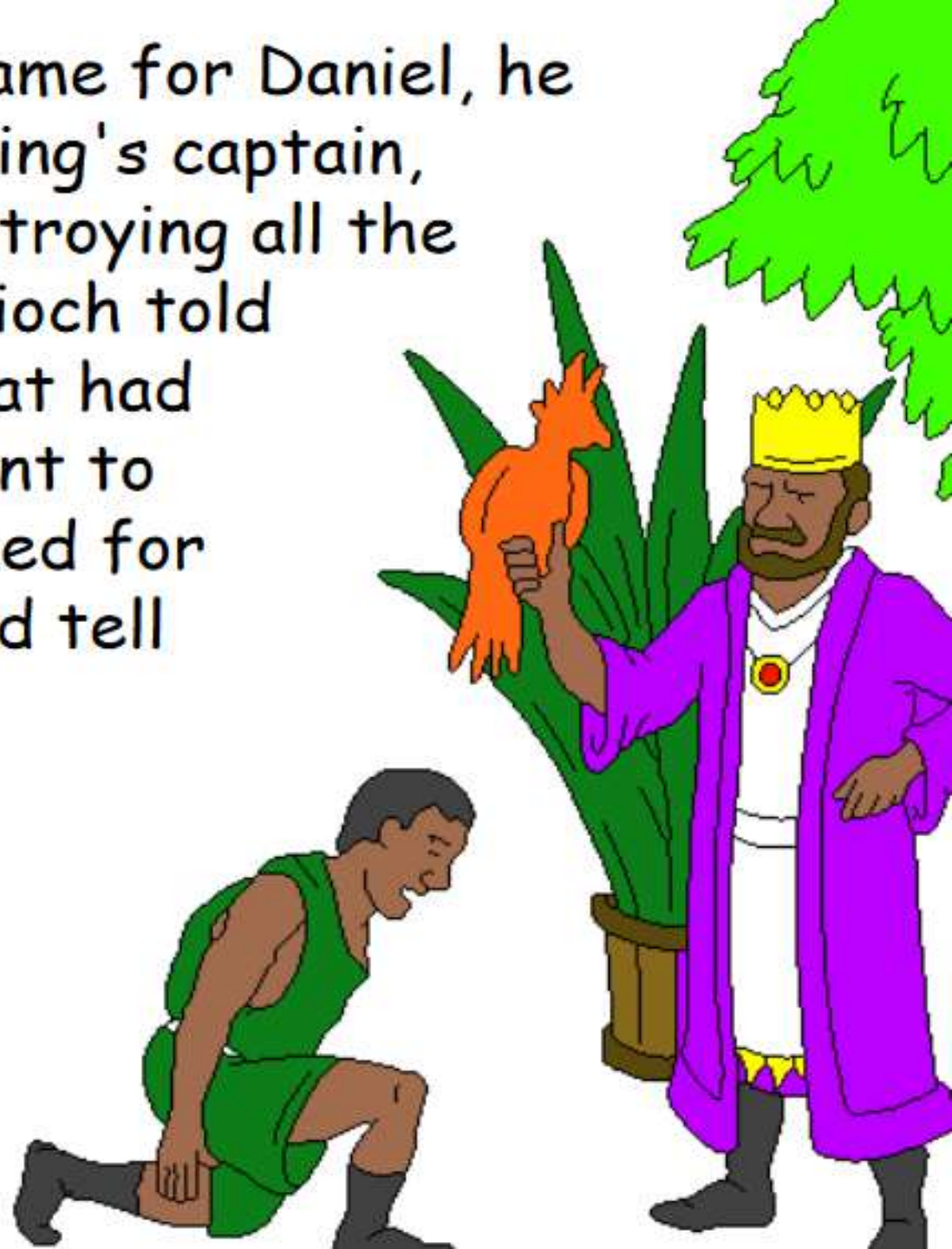
But if you tell me the dream and what it means," the king continued, "you will receive gifts and rewards and great honor." Of course, none of the wise men could tell the king his dream.



The king's wise men told the king, "There is not a man on the earth that can do what you ask. Only the gods can do that, and they don't live on earth." The king got very angry. "Destroy all the wise men of Babylon!" he commanded.



When the soldiers came for Daniel, he said to Arioch, the king's captain, "Why is the king destroying all the wise men?" Then Arioch told Daniel everything that had happened. Daniel went to see the king. He asked for more time so he could tell the king the meaning of his dream.



Then Daniel went to his house, and told everything to his friends Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. Daniel didn't know what the dream was or what it meant, but he knew Somebody who knows everything. That Somebody is God. So, Daniel and his friends prayed.



God showed Daniel the dream and its meaning. Daniel blessed the God of heaven, saying, "Blessed be the name of God for ever and ever, for wisdom and might are His." Daniel hurried to the king and said to him, "There is a God in heaven who reveals secrets." He told the king what he

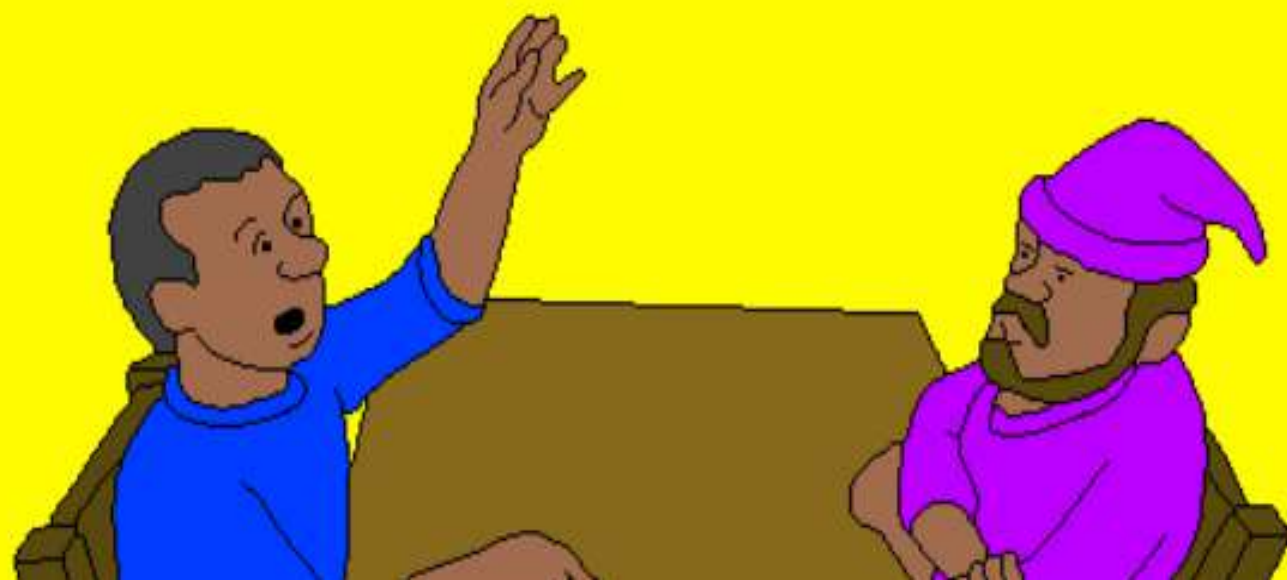
had dreamed and what the dream meant.



When King Nebuchadnezzar heard the dream and its meaning, he fell down before Daniel and said, "Truly your God is a God of gods, and a Lord of kings, and a revealer of secrets, since you could reveal this secret!" Then the king made Daniel a great man, and gave him many great gifts. He made him ruler over the whole province of Babylon, and chief over all the wise men of Babylon.



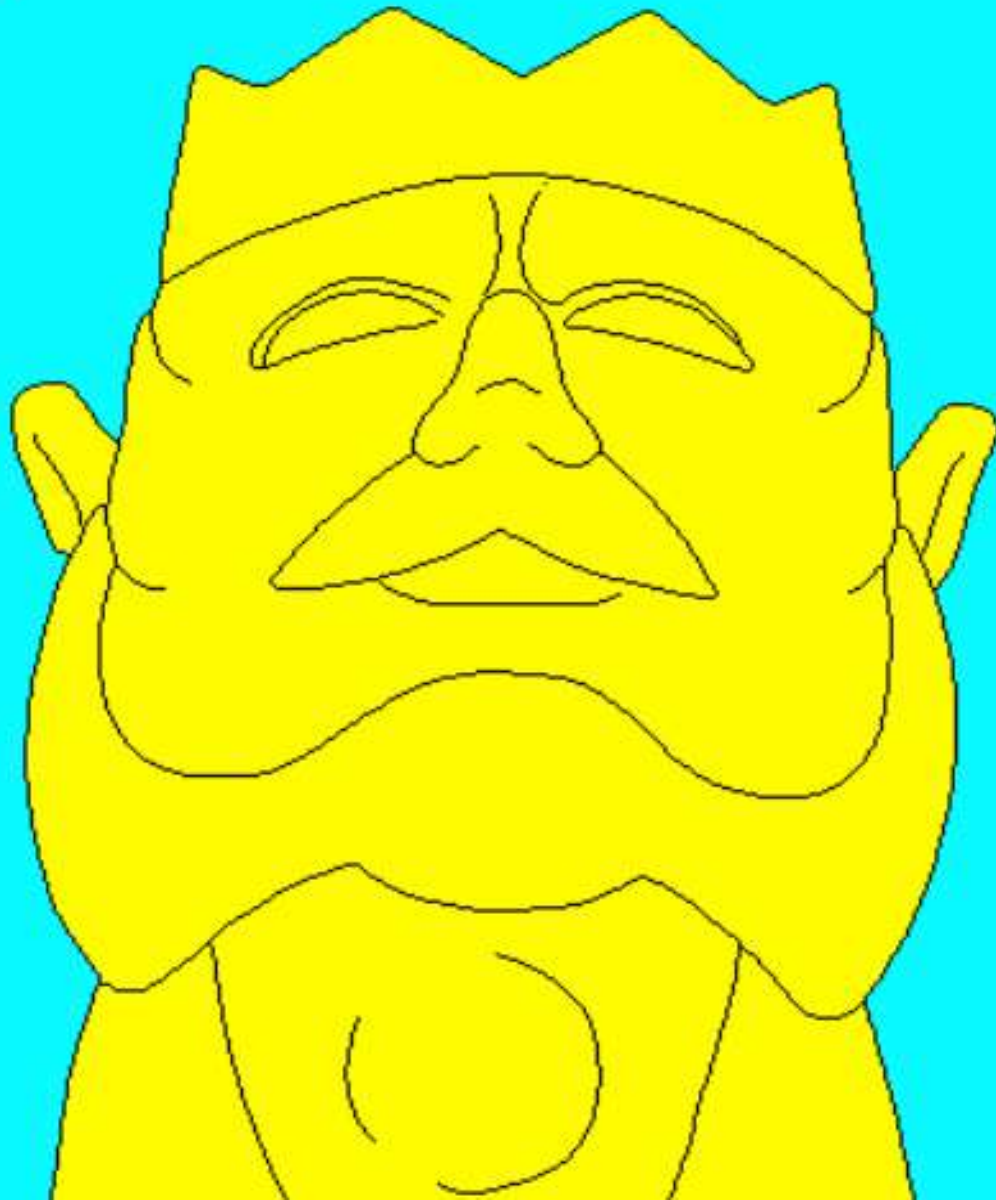
King Nebuchadnezzar had a dream, and this dream troubled him a lot. By God's power, Daniel was able to tell the king the meaning of his dream.



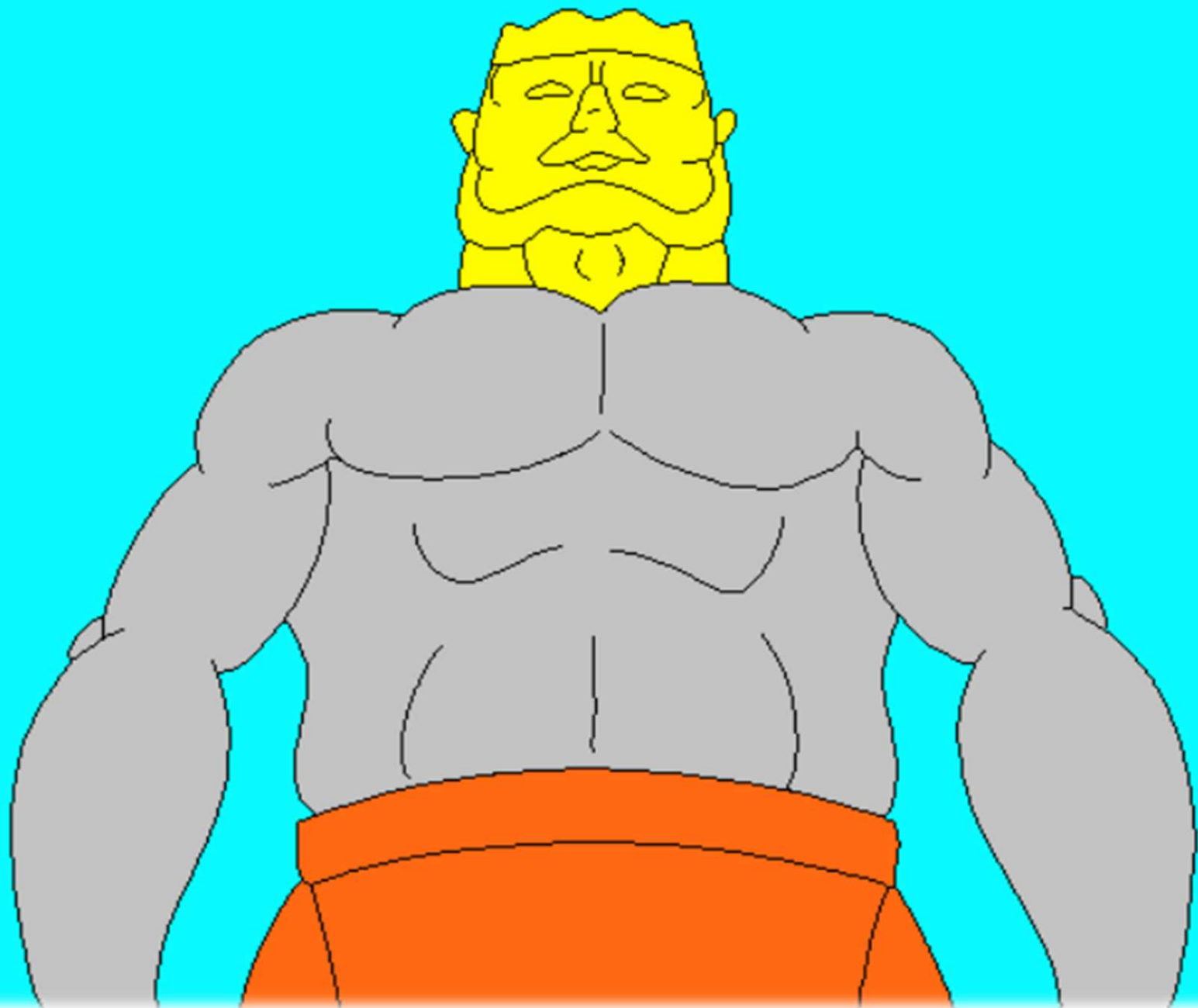


The first thing Daniel did was to describe the dream exactly. "You saw a great image of a huge statue, O King. Its form was awesome!"

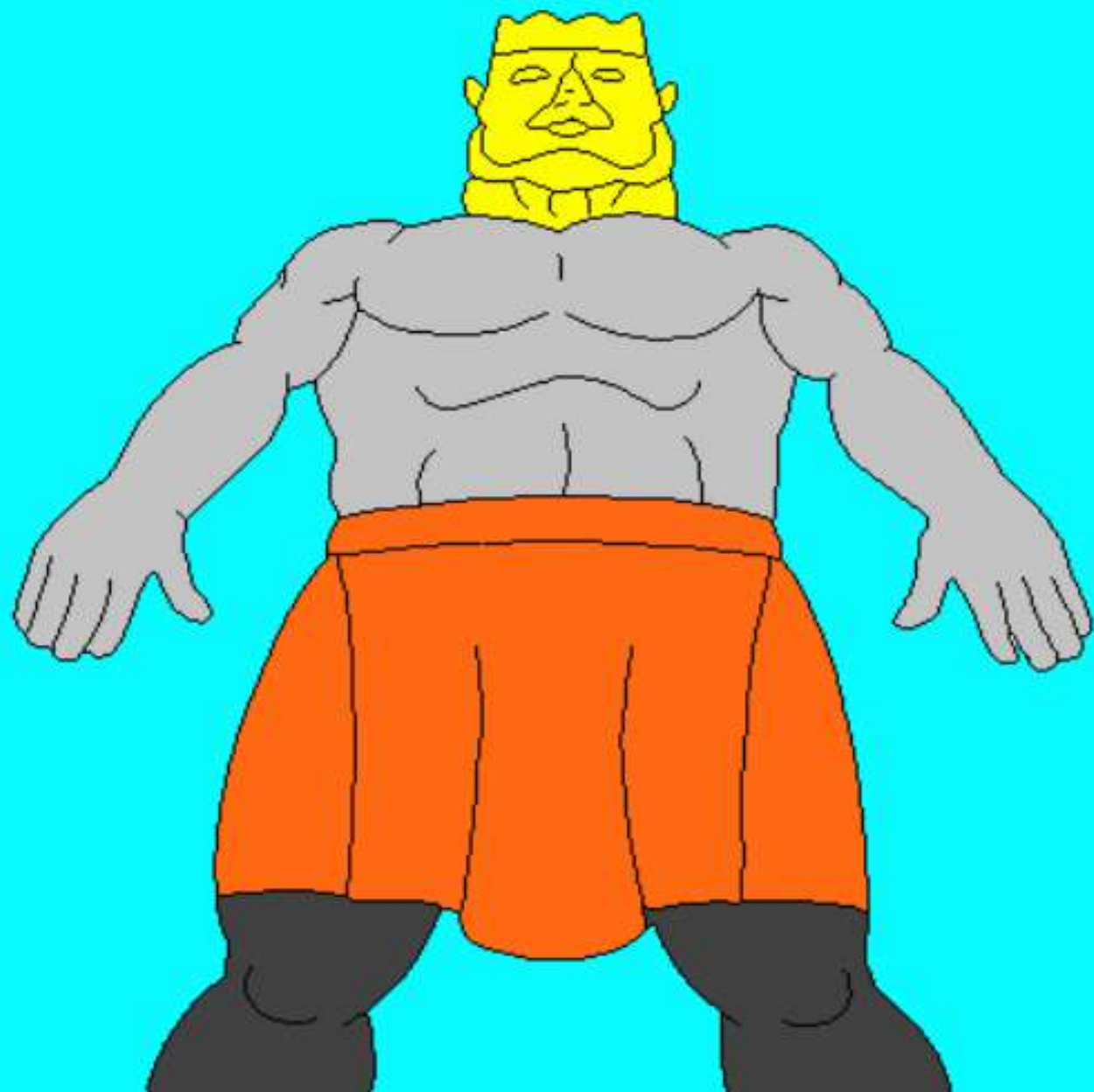
"The statue's head was made of gold," Daniel continued.



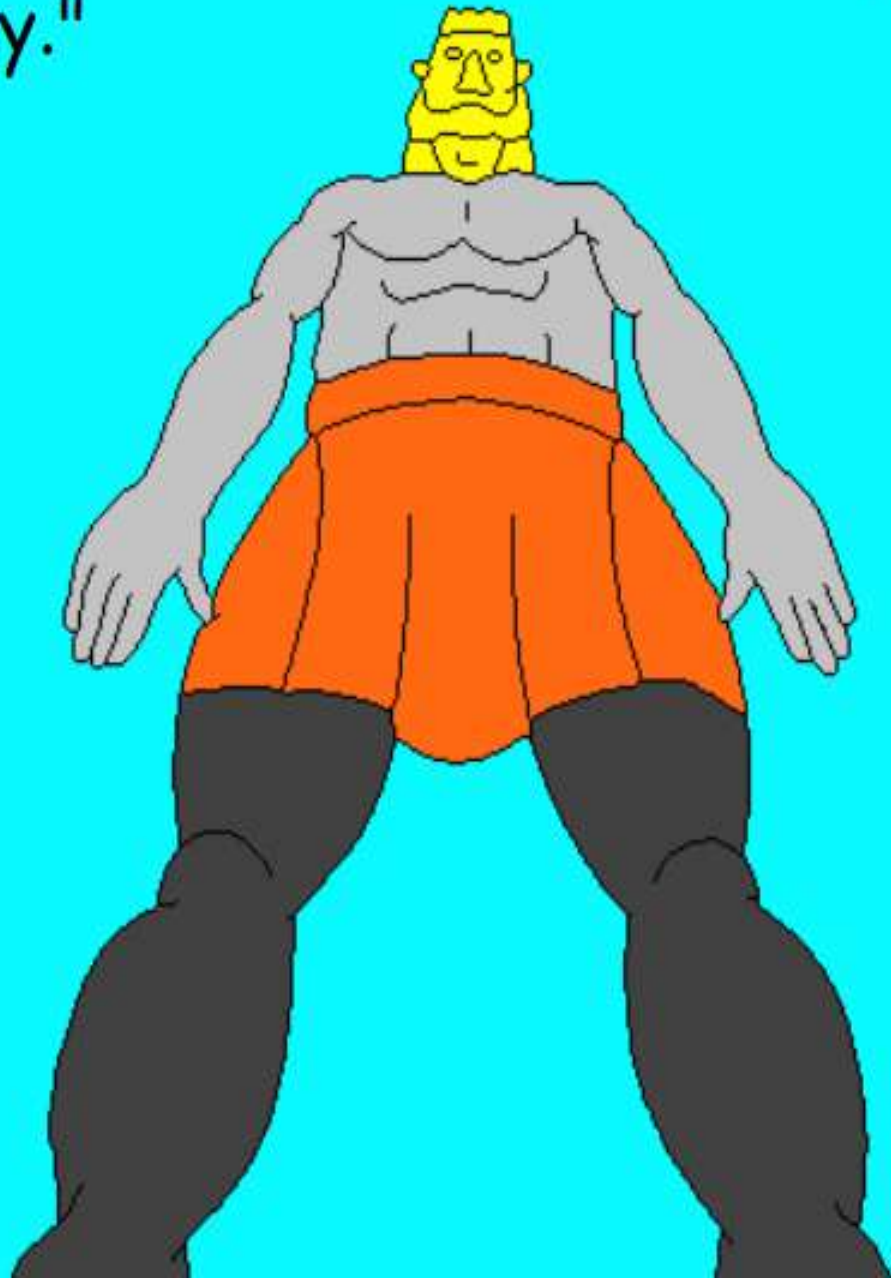
"Its chest and arms were made of silver."



"Its belly and thighs were made of bronze."



"Its legs were made of iron, its feet partly of iron, partly of clay."



After describing the statue to the king, Daniel told him the rest of the dream.



"You watched while a stone was
cut out without using hands,"
Daniel told the king.



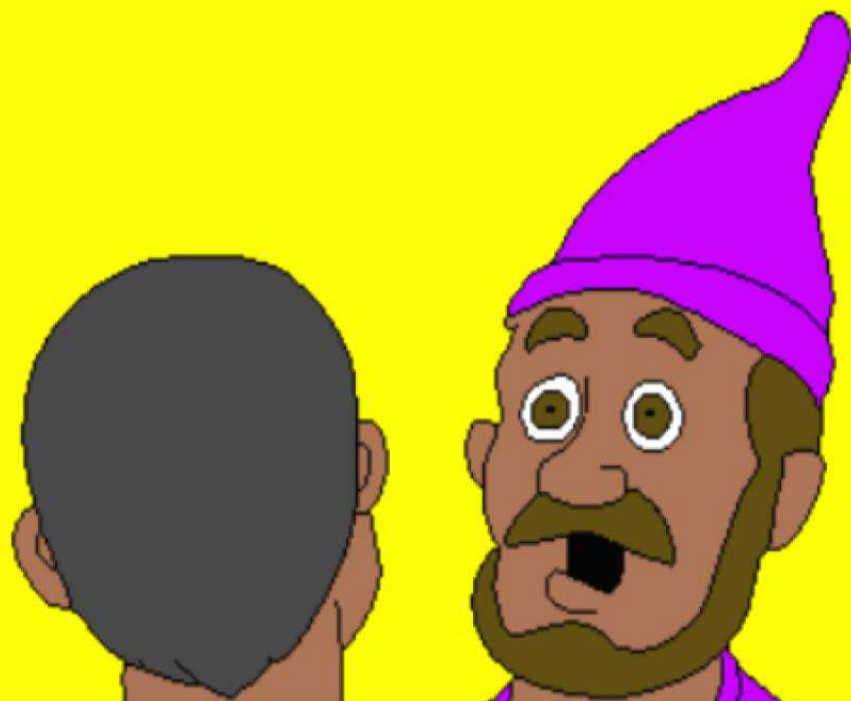
"The stone struck the image on its feet of iron and clay, and broke them in pieces."



"Then the statue was crushed
into dust and blown away."
Daniel paused. "And the stone
grew into a huge mountain
that filled the earth."



The king was amazed. That was exactly what he had dreamed! How could Daniel know that? Only because God told Daniel. Then Daniel began to tell King Nebuchadnezzar what the dream meant.





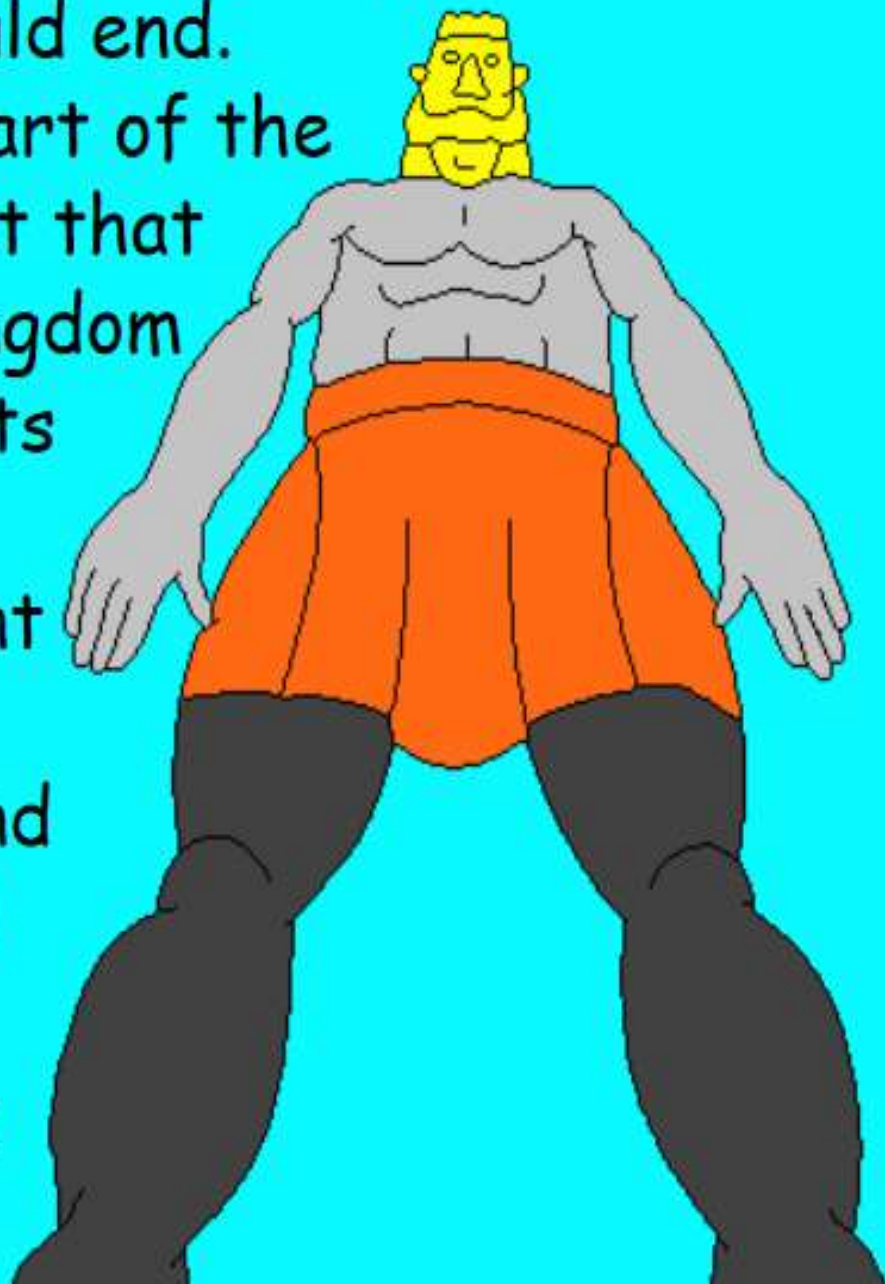
"The God of heaven has given you a kingdom, power, strength and glory,"

Daniel told the king.

"You are that head of gold."

Daniel told the king his golden kingdom would end.

The silver part of the statue meant that a weaker kingdom would take its place. The bronze meant yet another kingdom. And the iron and clay stood for a fourth kingdom.



KINGDOM 1

KINGDOM 2

KINGDOM 3

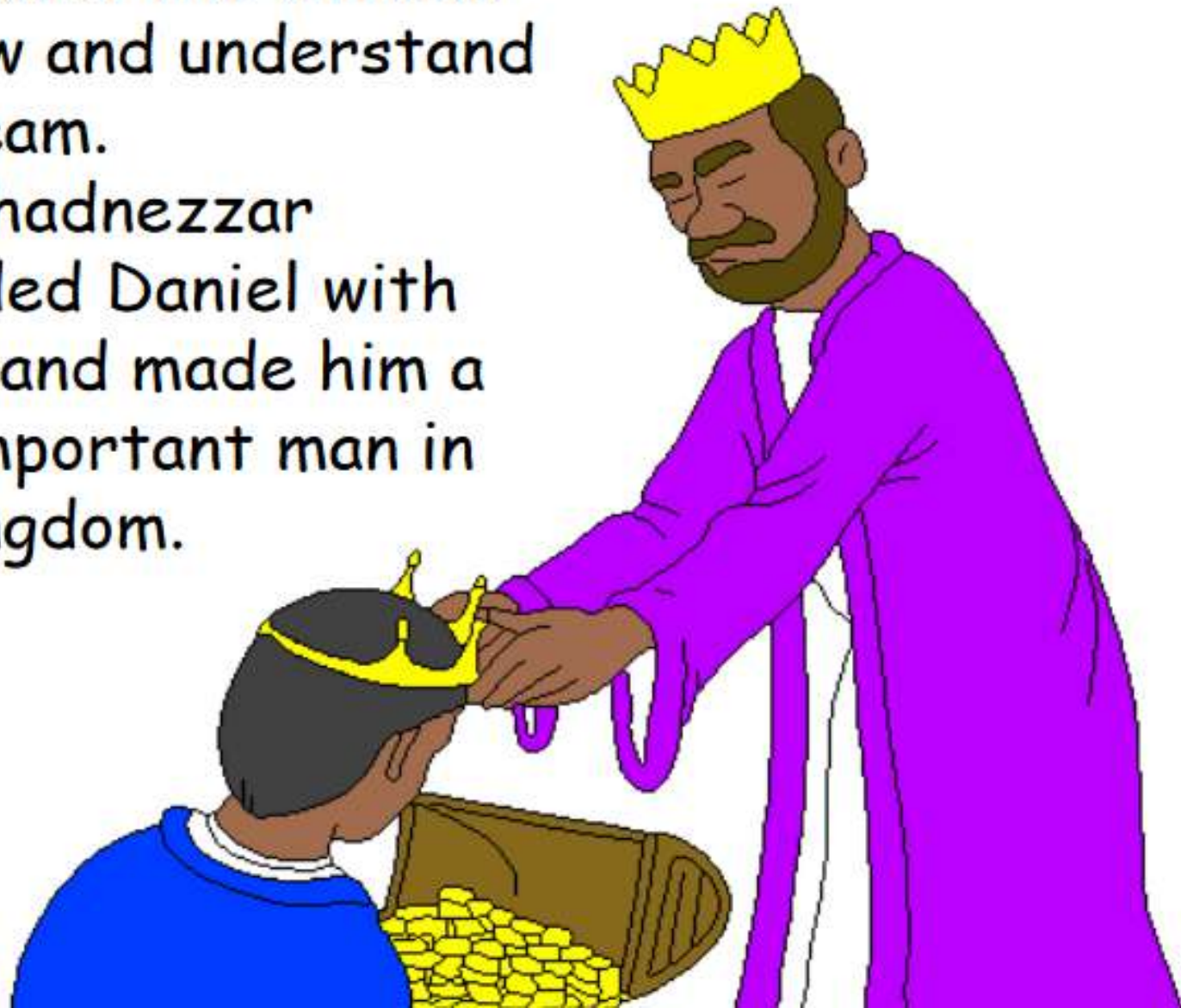
KINGDOM 4

The last thing Daniel told the king was this. "The God of heaven will set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed."



The king recognized that only God could give Daniel the wisdom to know and understand his dream.

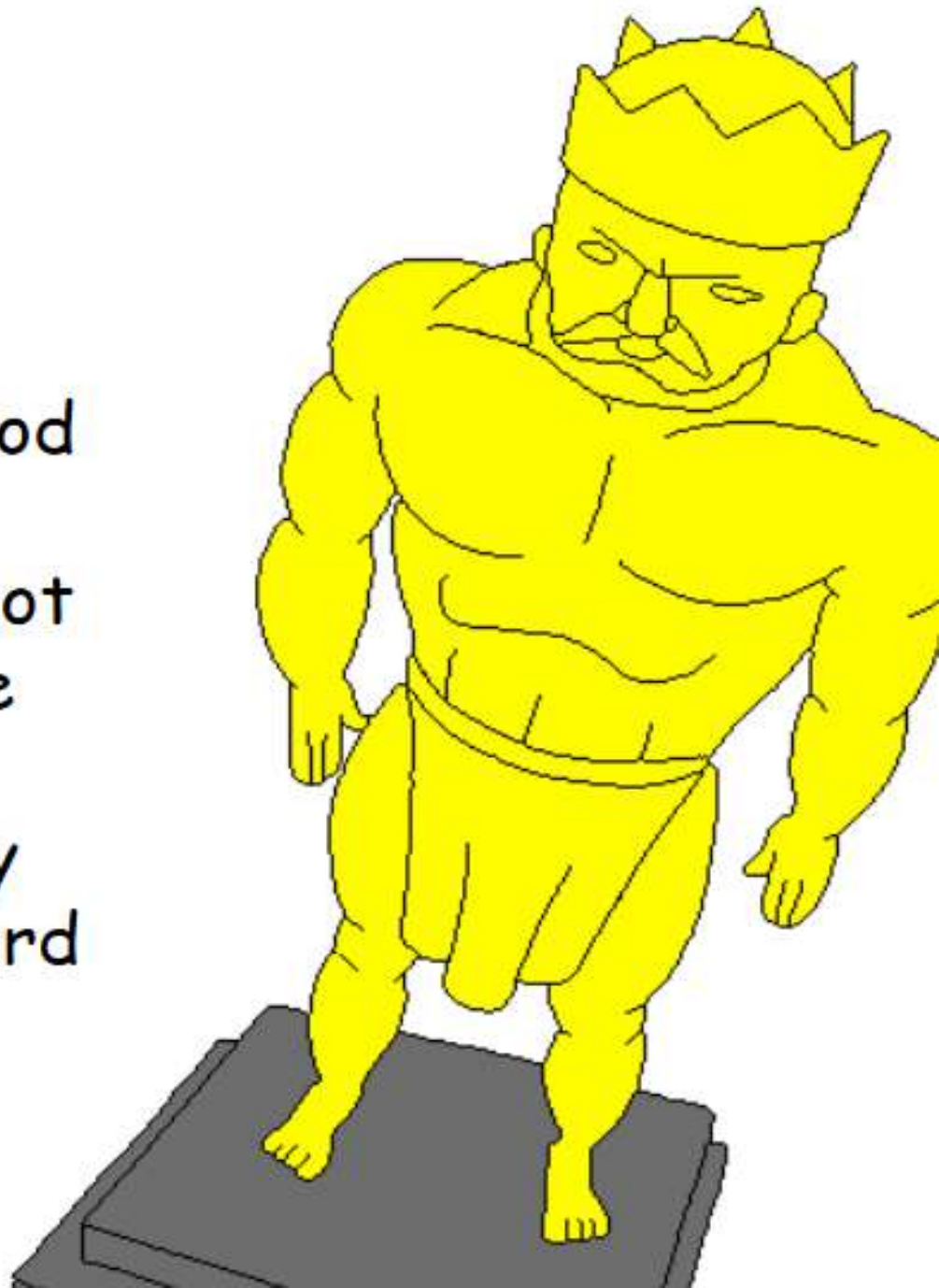
Nebuchadnezzar rewarded Daniel with riches and made him a very important man in the kingdom.





God's
kingdom is
coming after
kingdom 4.
The Messiah
will reign on
earth.

King Nebuchadnezzar built a huge golden statue. It was gold, from head to foot. Maybe the king had forgotten the dream God sent to tell him his golden kingdom would not last forever. Maybe he thought if he built a statue made completely of gold, then God's Word in his dream would not come true.



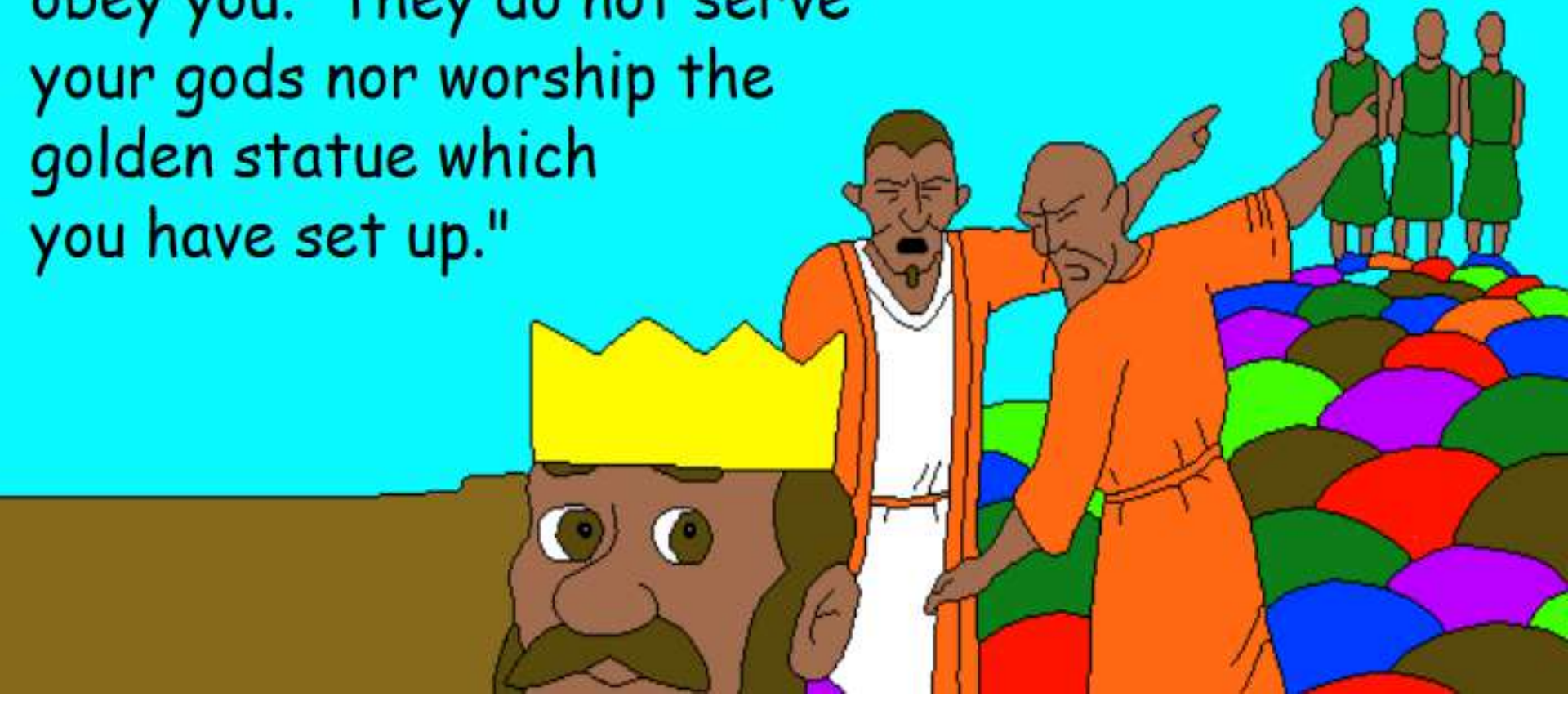
One of the king's servants read the order to all the people: " ... you shall fall down and worship the golden statue ... And whoever does not fall down and worship will be thrown into the middle of a burning fiery furnace."



Everybody did what the king ordered - except for three men. These men were Hebrews. They were Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, friends of Daniel. It seems Daniel wasn't there at the time, for surely he too would have refused to worship a man-made idol.



The king's wise men were jealous of Daniel and his friends because the king liked them. So they said, "There are three men whom you have placed as rulers over the province of Babylon - Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. These men, O king, do not obey you. They do not serve your gods nor worship the golden statue which you have set up."





King Nebuchadnezzar was filled with rage. He warned them, "If you do not worship, you will be thrown into the middle of a burning fiery furnace. And which god will deliver you out of my hand?"

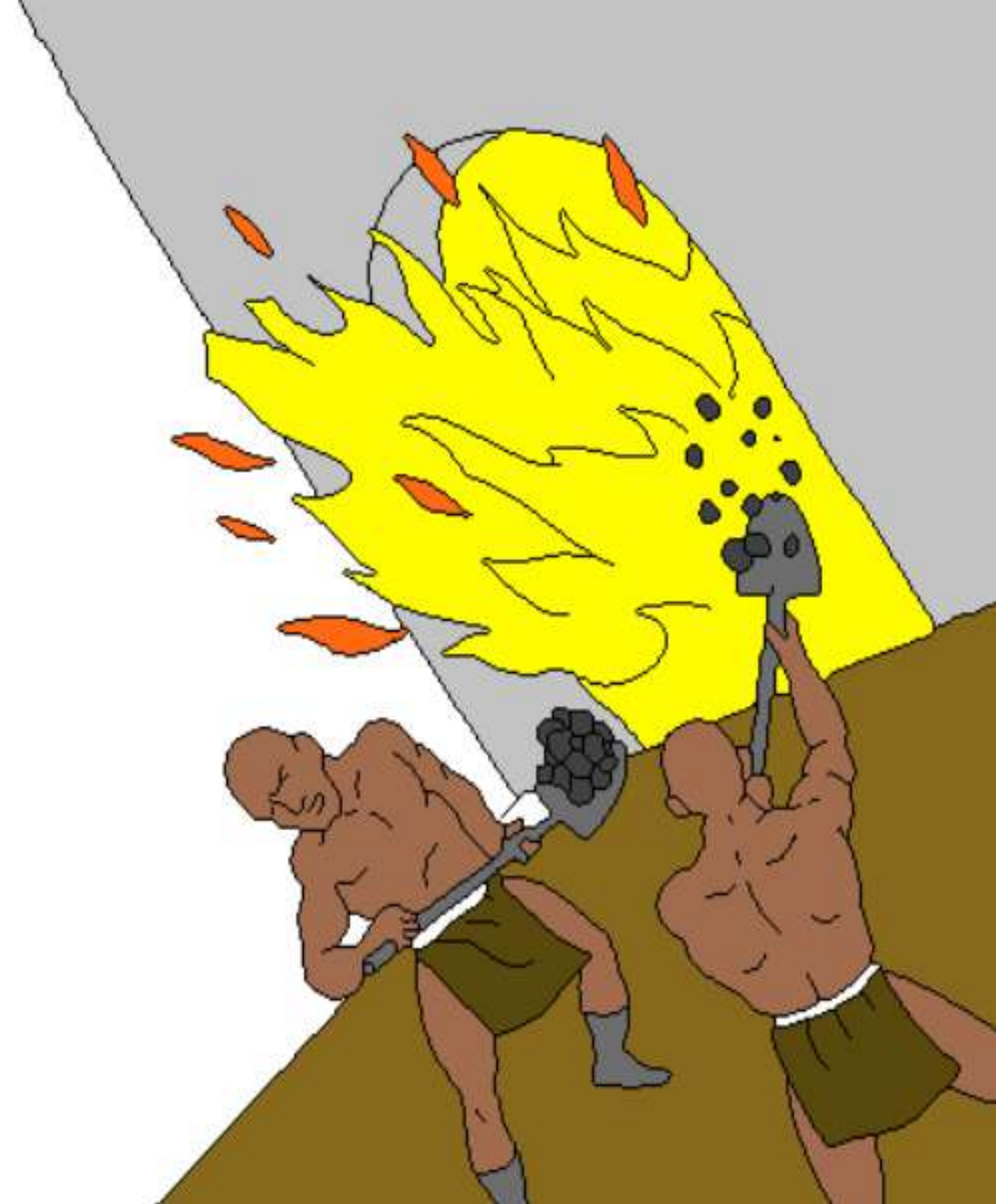
The king was making a big mistake. He was really challenging the living God. The three Hebrew men knew it was against God's law to worship a statue. They stayed standing. Because they trusted God, they were not afraid of the king.



These three brave men had an answer for the king. They said, "Our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace. But if not, let it be known to you, O king, that we will not serve your gods nor worship the golden statue which you have set up."



King Nebuchadnezzar was furious! He commanded that they should heat the furnace seven times more than it was usually heated. Still the men would not kneel.



The king commanded mighty men in his army to tie up Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, and to throw them into the burning fiery furnace.



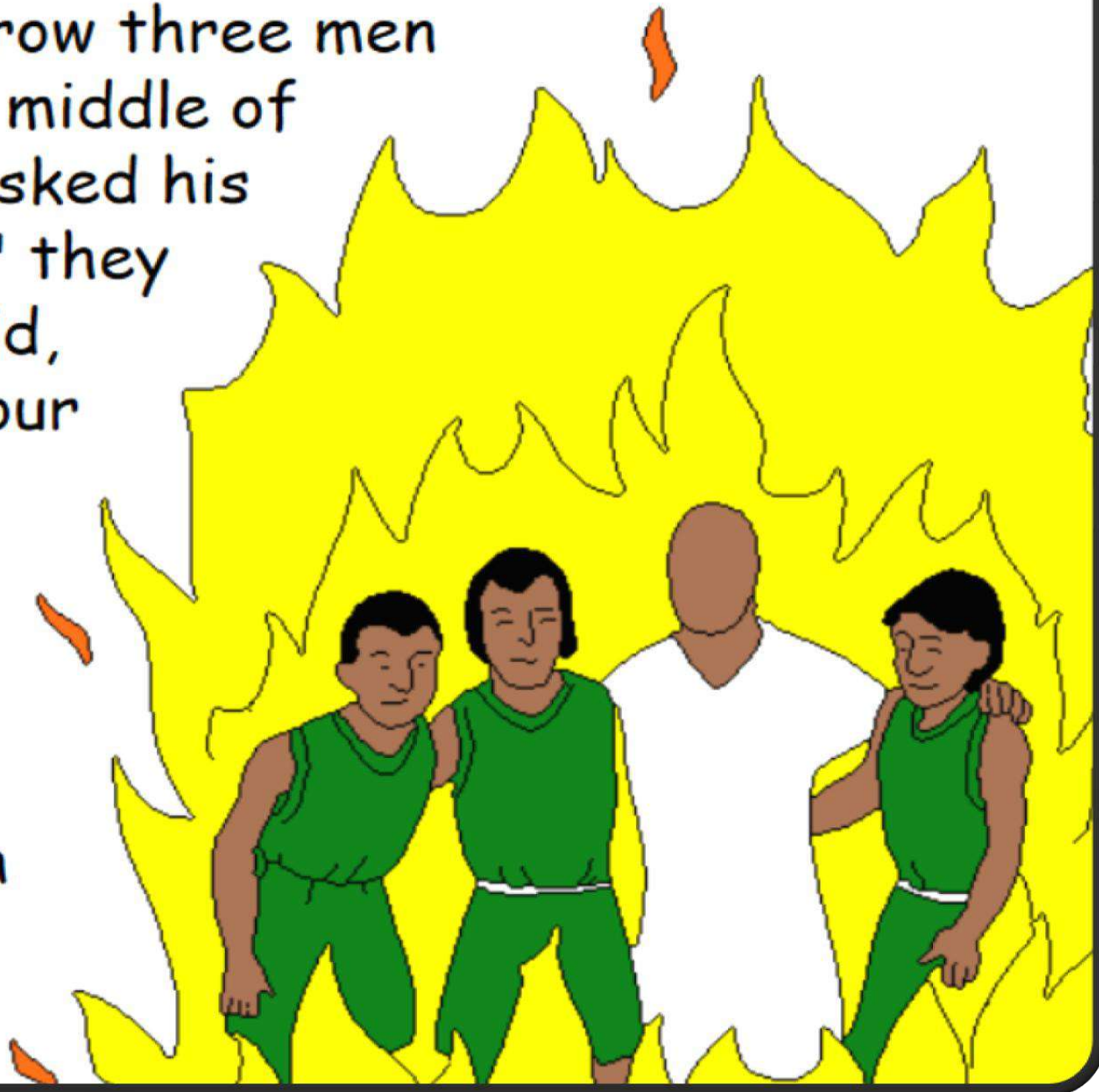
The furnace was so hot that the men who threw Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego into the fire were killed by the heat.



The king watched from a safe distance. He saw the three men being thrown right into the middle of the blazing furnace. But that's not all he saw.



King Nebuchadnezzar was amazed!
"Did we not throw three men
bound into the middle of
the fire?" he asked his
helpers. "Yes," they
replied. He said,
"Look! I see four
men loose,
walking in the
middle of the
fire, and they
are not hurt.
And the fourth
one is like the
Son of God!"



Moving close to the door of the burning fiery furnace, the king cried out, "Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, servants of the Most High God, come out!" Then Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, came out of the fiery furnace.



Everybody gathered around and examined the three Hebrews. They had seen that the fire had no power to burn them. Their hair wasn't scorched and their clothes were not burned. There was not even the smell of fire on them.

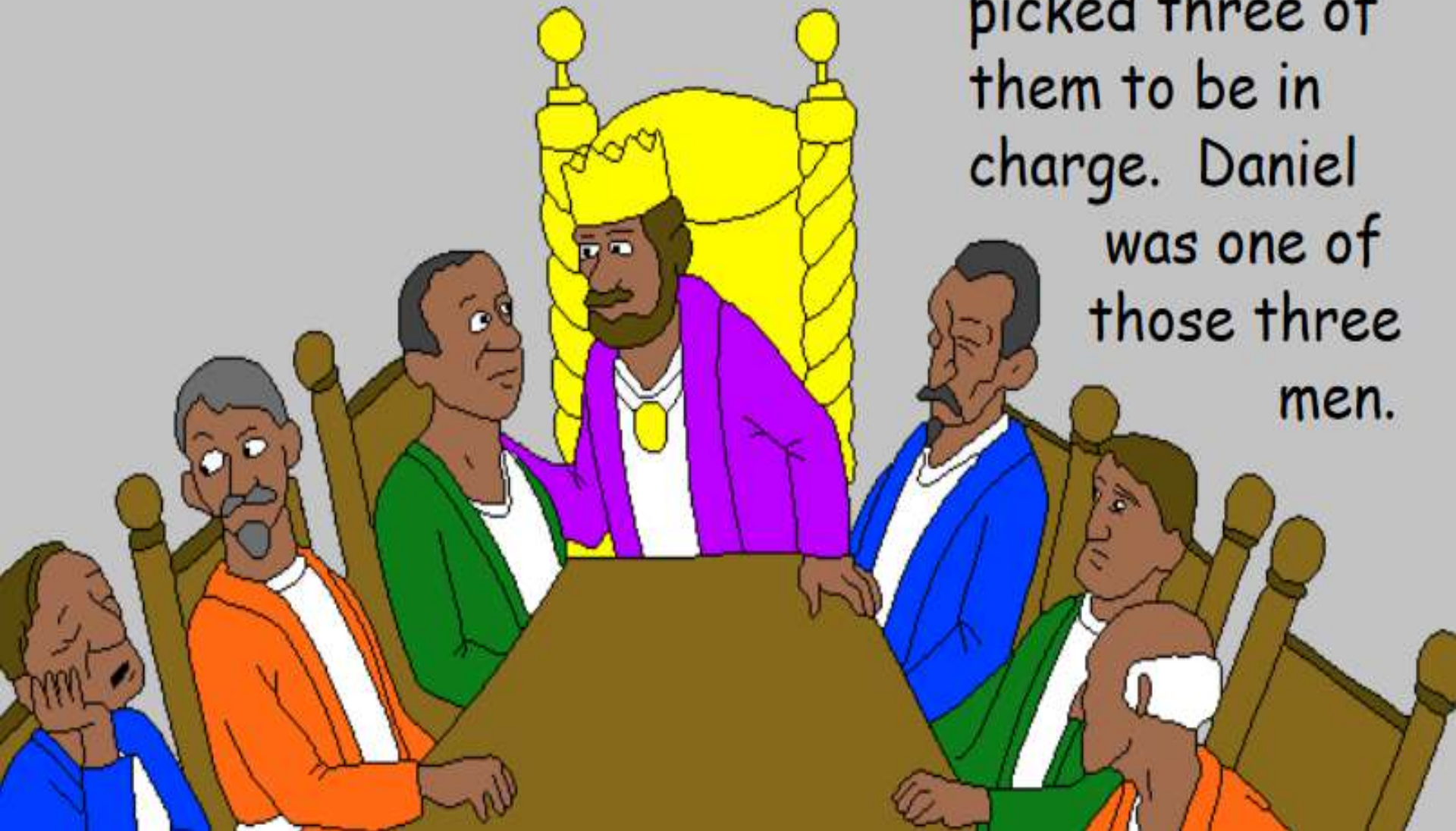


When he realized what had happened, King Nebuchadnezzar did something very wise. He prayed, and said, "Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, who has sent His Angel and has delivered His servants who trusted in Him."

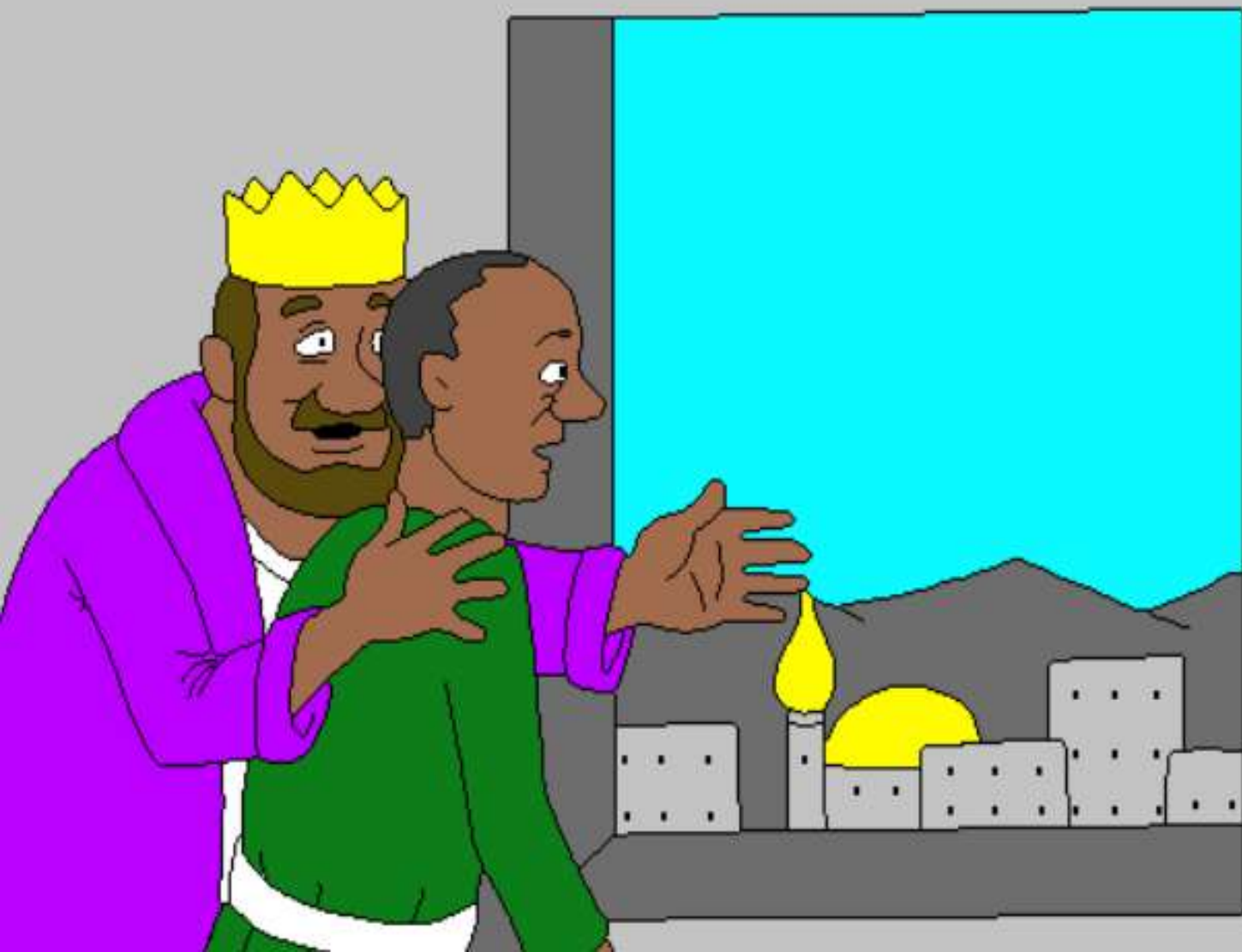


Darius was the new king of Babylon. He was smart. He picked a hundred and twenty of the very best people in his kingdom to help him rule. Then he

picked three of them to be in charge. Daniel was one of those three men.



King Darius respected Daniel so much, he thought about making him the ruler over the whole kingdom.



The other leaders were jealous. They planned to find some fault in Daniel so they could get Daniel in trouble with the king.

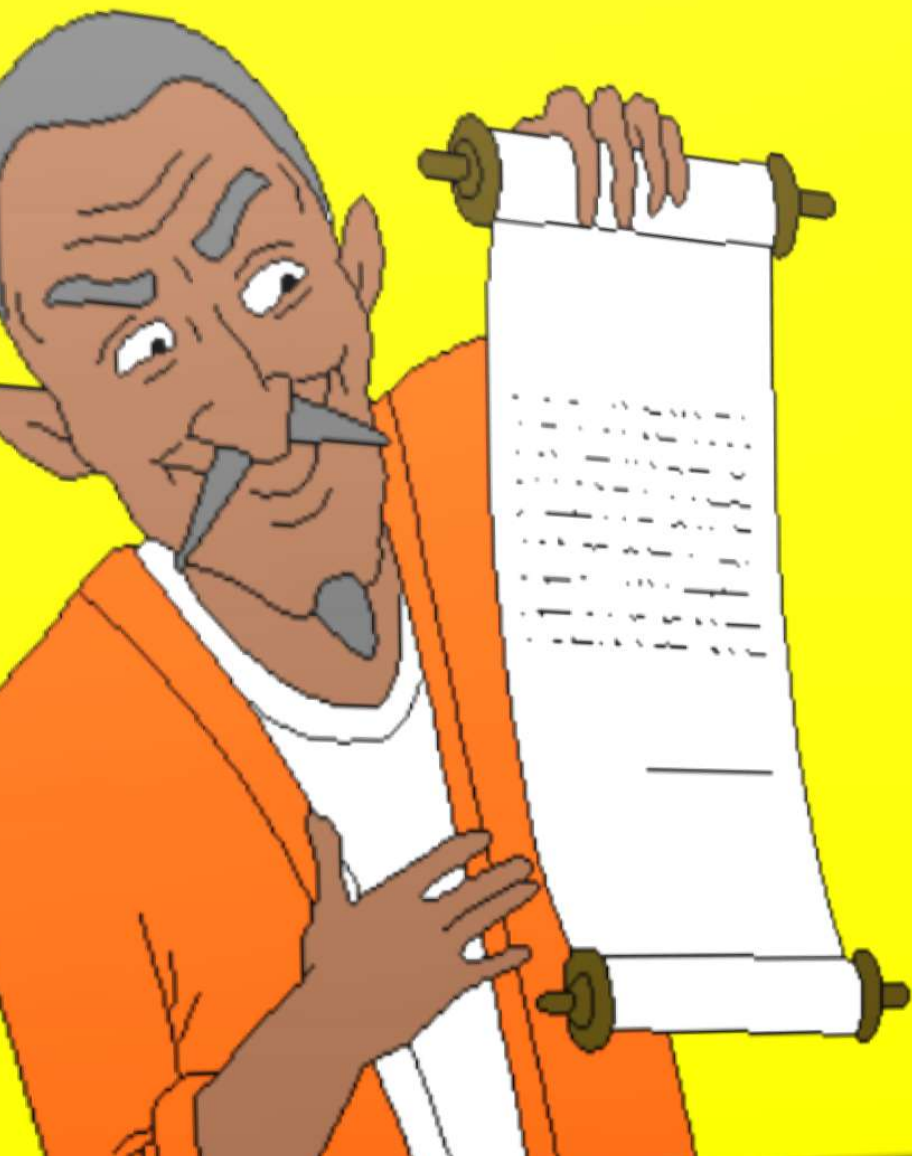


No matter how they tried, these leaders couldn't find anything bad about Daniel. Daniel was true to the king in all that he did. Also, he was careful and clever, and always did everything the very best he could.



The jealous leaders knew there was only one way they could trap Daniel. They knew that nothing on earth would stop him from worshiping the God of Israel.





Daniel's enemies
thought up a plan.
They made a new
law for the king to
sign. The law said
that everyone
should pray only
to King Darius.
Anyone who
disobeyed would
be thrown into
a den of lions!

King Darius signed the new law.



King Darius signed the new law.



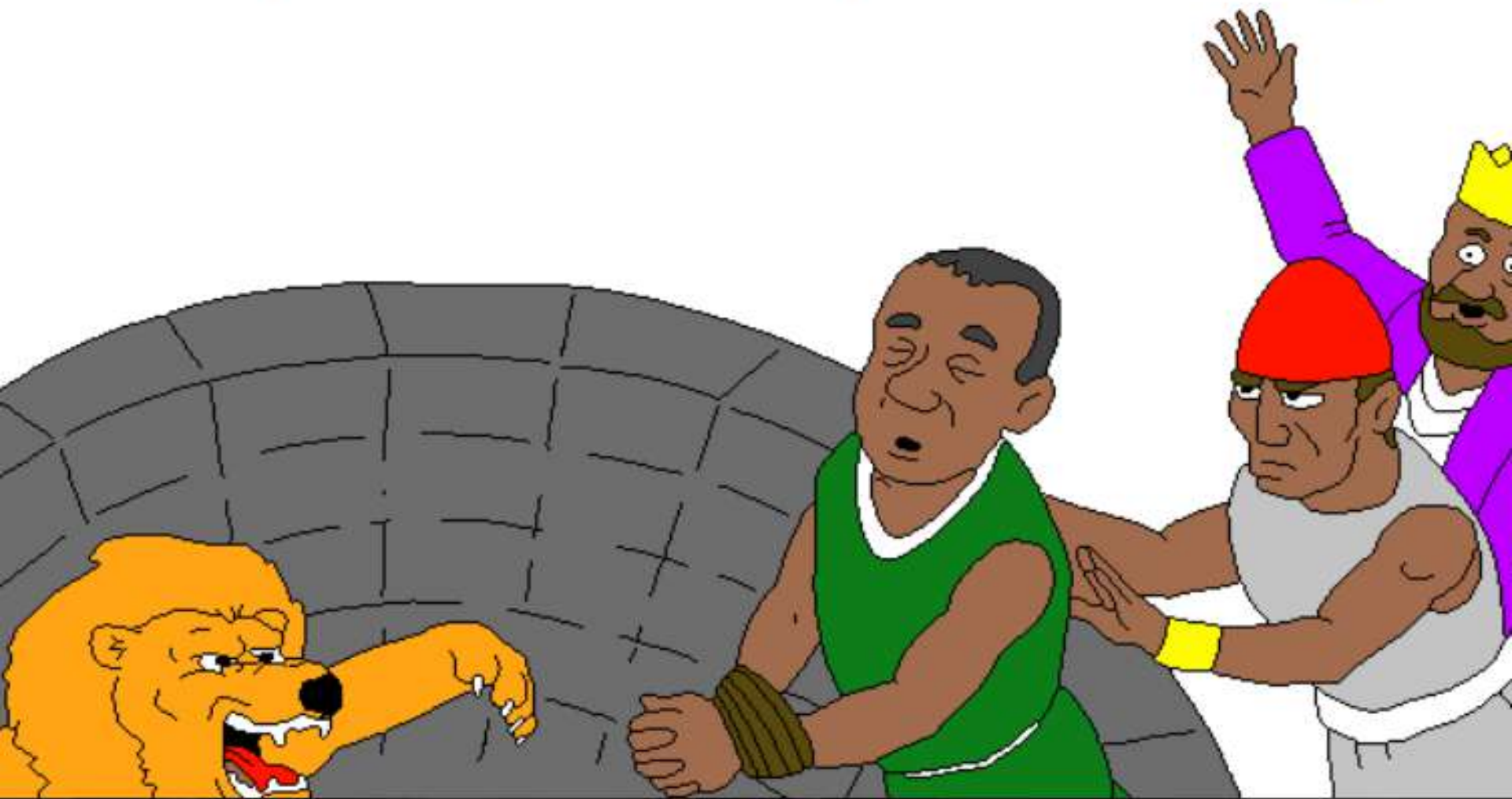
The new law made no difference to Daniel. He did what he always did. He kneeled by his open window three times a day, and prayed to the God of heaven.





The jealous leaders rushed to tell the king. King Darius had no choice but to arrest Daniel. The law had to be obeyed. Daniel had to die. The king tried hard, but he couldn't find a way to change the law.

Daniel was sentenced to die by being put into a den of lions. Before Daniel was thrown to the hungry lions, King Darius said to him, "Your God, Whom you serve continually, He will deliver you!"



The king didn't sleep that night. Very early the next morning, he rushed back to the lions' pit.





King Darius shouted out, "Daniel, servant of the living God, has your God Whom you serve continually, been able to deliver you from the lions?" Maybe he didn't expect an answer. But Daniel replied!

Daniel called out, "O king, my God sent His angel and shut the lions' mouths, so that they have not hurt me! And also, O king, I have done no wrong before you."



King Darius was delighted! He ordered Daniel to be lifted out of the pit.



The king knew God had delivered Daniel and that Daniel's enemies were God's enemies. He gave a command, and all those who tricked him to sign the bad law were thrown into the lions' den. The lions ate them.



King Darius wanted the world to know that the God of Heaven had protected His faithful servant Daniel. The king wrote a letter that commanded everybody to worship the living God. And the king restored Daniel to honor and leadership.

